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Title : Need to set up a Passport Office at Nagarcoil, Tamil Nadu.

SHRI A.V. BELLARMIN (NAGERCOIL): In the globalised scenario the number of Indian nationals migrating to foreign countries for employment, is increasing day by day. Out of lakhs of Indian Nationals working abroad, majority of workers are from Tamil Nadu, particularly from my native District Kanyakumari and Kerala. At present, untold hardships are being experienced by them in renewing the passport and for the new applicants in getting the passports in time.

There are only three Regional Passport Offices, two of which are in Chennai and one is in Tiruchirapally catering to the needs of applicants from all over Tamil Nadu. A cursory survey, reveals that next to Chennai the maximum number of passport applicants dealt with and passports issued are from the Regional Passport Office at Tiruchirapally. Seeing the pitiable plight of the applicants and the undesirable practices perpetrated upon them by private Travel Agencies, the Government was kind enough to open up passport cells in District Collectorates. Now from the statistics and details collected from District Collectorate passport cells, it is understood that next to Chennai, it is the passport cell functioning at the District Collectorate, Kanyakymari, which is receiving the maximum number of passport applications and these are sent to Trichy B.P.O. for processing and issue. It is ascertained that an average number of 85 to 100 applications are received every day nowadays at Nagercoil Cell unlike 20-25 received in 2002. But applicants suffer from undue delay in getting the passport as it consumes much time in complying with the requirements such as police verification report etc. So, it will be facilitating to the applicants in and around Kanyakumari District, say Tirunelveil and Tuticorin Districts, if the Government considers setting up a passport office at Nagercoil and it will be economical if the existing district passport cell is upgraded and made as a passport office.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Shailendera Kumar − Not present.